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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0159
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE 0798
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE IMMEDIATE 0071
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 002012

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/29/2016
TAGS: [GH](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#)
SUBJECT: GHANA'S ATTORNEY GENERAL REQUESTS HELP ON
NARCOTICS

REF: ACCRA 1793

Classified By: PolChief Scott Ticknor for reasons 1.5 d and e.

11. (U) This is an action message (see para 6.)

12. (C) In an August 29 meeting with DCM, Attorney General and Minister of Justice Joe Ghartey said he and his Department are consumed with the narcotics issue, which "began as a scandal and became a crime". The Georgina Wood Commission has completed its work and will issue a report by September 10, he said. He had ordered the arrest of the four main suspects caught on tape discussing cocaine deals, including a large shipment from the fishing vessel Benjamin (reftel). This decision was clearly within the law, he said, which covers anyone involved in narcotics trafficking, not just those found in possession. Ghartey thought businessman Alhaji Moro, who is also recorded on the tape, was not guilty because he stayed out of the room during the cocaine discussion and specializes in armed robbery, not drug trafficking. He ordered a fifth narcotics arrest of a cook who owns a boat. The GOG is still investigating the whereabouts of the missing 2,000 kilos of cocaine from the Benjamin, he said. He opined that the Wood Commission has succeeded in educating the public about the narcotics problem. The DCM hoped it would also lead to prosecutions.

13. (C) When asked about judicial corruption, Ghartey said "narcotics and corruption are Siamese twins". He had recently arrested a judge caught on tape accepting bribes and will try the case personally. Two other similar cases are before the courts, Ghartey said, concluding "we need to put some judges in jail". He professed to be very committed to fighting corruption, for which he claimed he has the support of the President.

14. (C) Ghartey said that the key to quickly resolving the cases of the four narcotics suspects and the corrupt judge was authenticating their voices on the respective tapes. Predictably, the suspects have denied that the voices are theirs and Ghana reportedly has no experts who can authenticate these voices for use in court. A dispute about the authenticity of the tapes could jeopardize prosecuting these cases, Ghartey said. He asked for USG assistance in providing a voice expert to authenticate these tapes (which

are in the Twi language). If necessary, the GOG can pay for such services, although he was concerned that anyone paid by the state might be seen as biased. He would like an answer by September 10.

¶5. (C) Comment: Gharthey's mind is clearly absorbed by the narcotics issue. He deflected questions about other issues saying that he could not think about other, non-narcotics issues at this time. National "confidence in the institutions of state are at stake" in the narcotics issue, he said, arguing that already criminals are trying to take advantage of internal authority problems in the police. A young, ambitious lawyer, he also no doubt hopes that prosecuting narcotraffickers will boost his own political career. End comment.

¶6. (C) Action: Please provide guidance on possibility of assistance with voice authentication. It is in the USG interest to do what we can to facilitate convictions of those involved in narcotics trafficking in Ghana.

BRIDGEWATER